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EDITORIAL.

THE RIGHTS OF TRAINED NURSES.

To all men and women of thoughtful and receptive minds, the war, notwithstanding all its horrors, has been a useful if stern instructor. Among the many valuable lessons learnt, and one of the most outstanding, is the value of intimate contact. We have watched with the deepest interest the ties which bind the Mother Country to the Colonies growing stronger and stronger. It has strengthened our patriotism as never before; it has given us a practical interpretation of solidarity—which we badly needed. Speaking broadly—in spite of strikes and rumour of strikes (perhaps because of them)—we are approaching nearer to the ideal of national solidarity. Nearer, but not very near even yet. We trained nurses might, with much profit, take the signs of the times as a parable applicable to ourselves. We have Imperial Conferences, and Inter-Allied Conferences. The deliberations and conclusions arising therefrom, constitute a force which has brought us within sight of victory. *L'union fait la force.* There is not the slightest doubt about that legend.

This intimate contact is needed in the nursing profession in order to make it "safe for democracy." We have an effective plant ready at hand. We have our own professional societies, well organised and properly constituted. We have self-governing societies of certificated nurses grouped in our National Council, and with other National Associations we are grouped in the International Council of Nurses, and few of us thus associated can express or perhaps even realize, what we owe to its inspiration. Again we have the Royal British Nurses' Association, the only body of nurses to possess a Royal Charter, of which every member is justly proud, for it

confers both prestige and the power to promote good constructive work.

No progress can be made either in the government of a country, or the government of a profession, where the workers are denied representation—adequate representation—on the governing body. It is further necessary that nurses should realize the historical certainty that autocracy in their profession will die hard, and that their just rights can never be sufficiently secured, while it exists.

Nevertheless, with unity, determination and solidarity ultimate victory is assured. The true spirit of liberty is never defeated. Let us remember that we are fighting in our own beloved profession (as well as throughout the civilised world) to overthrow this wrongful power, in the best interests of the sick, and in the interests of posterity. A careful and critical study of the Bill for State Registration of Nurses promoted by the Central Committee, will abundantly repay those who are interested in nursing politics, so will the synopsis printed inside our front cover, which shows what nurses agree to who sign the application form for Registration and Membership of the College of Nursing, Ltd.

It is an interesting fact that the idea of self-government has found expression even in prisons: in some parts of America where prison reform is far advanced. The results have been all that could be desired. The spirit of self-determination pervades the whole world. It is no phantom spirit. It is quietly, though insistently palpable.

The lure of it is felt by all the most intelligent nurses in this country. But nothing worth having can come, or will come, by lazily wishing for it only, except in fairy tales. If workers want their rights, they must assert themselves in the only practical way—namely by working for them, and working for them in conjunction with others. *L'union fait la force.*

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